

DISEASE LURKS IN CHEAP DRINKS.

Use of Second Hand Corks a Menace to the Lives of Thousands.

GATHERED BY SCAVENGERS.

Process of Bottling Believed to Infect the Liquid with Deadly Germs.

DANGER IN STREET STANDS.

Attention of the Health Board Called to the Matter, but the Chemist is Said to Have Been Deceived by Bottlers.

A large proportion of what are known as second hand corks, are said, on good authority, to contain disease germs. These corks are used extensively in the poorer districts of the city, and the Board of Health has been criticised for not making a thorough investigation of the evil.

Most of the second hand corks are gathered in various parts of the city by scavengers. It makes no difference to the scavenger how vile the spot may be where the cork is found. It may come out of a cesspool or sewer, from a garbage heap, an ash barrel or barroom sweepings. It's all the same to the scavenger. All he seeks is the filling of his pail with corks whether they be black with dirt or of the cleaner variety. For a paltry fee he receives from 25 to 30 cents. The purchaser is some East Side cork dealer, who washes them over with muriatic acid and brightens their appearance. Then he in turn sells the corks to second class bottlers for from 10 to 12 cents a gross.

These bottlers may be found in great number in the thickly populated districts of the city. Most of them are located in basements or cellars. Some of these basements and cellars are damp and unhealthy. Then certain bottles have their stoppers on the same floor, in the same room, where the bottling is done.

Soda water bottled in these places is the kind sold in many of the low class saloons, cheap groceries and at the street stands, so numerous on the East Side of town. The soda water is sold for a cent a glass or bottle. Its varied coloring is due to the use of aniline. The manufacturer uses on an average of eight cents of aniline in a gallon of syrup. Often glucose is used instead, although saccharine is coming into favor as a cheap substitute for sugar. About an ounce of syrup is used to each bottle of soda water.

The second-hand corks are soaked in water, so that they can be driven into the bottles. This forcing process sends all the fifth and dirt still on the cork into the soda water in the bottle and this mixture is what is consumed by men, women and children of the tenement districts are drinking under the name of soda water, sarsaparilla and ginger ale.

It is alleged, moreover, that the great majority of the soda water fountains, used by these vendors of the cheap stuff, are in a bad state of repair. If it is true, as it is, that the soda water is bottled in these places, it is not surprising that it is so often found to be impure. The public buys it in twenty-four bottles. The public buys it at any price the grocer or saloon keeper or stand owner chooses to ask.

Some time ago the danger to health from these second-hand corks was pointed out to the Board of Health. A chemical test was made of a number of the corks to determine simply whether the liquids used in bottling were pure or not. The result was that the matter was dropped. It is alleged that a chemist of the Health Department was sent to examine the bottles, but that he was deceived by having shown him bottles that had been filled by first-class houses. "The evil is overstated," said a representative of G. B. Seelye's Son, bottler, in West Fifteenth street. "The Health Board could easily secure plenty of corks and test them. Let it send one of its inspectors to the cellars where this stuff is bottled, and let him make a thorough test of the corks he finds there. He will find plenty of evidence on which to base very radical action by the department."

CAN'T LAY OIL PIPES.

The Elizabeth Common Council Revokes the Commission Recently Granted to the National Transit Company.

Elizabeth, N. J., May 22.—The National Transit Oil Company, which recently secured a \$300,000 franchise from the City Council here, was beaten Friday in the first point of the struggle against indignant property owners for possession of the city streets in which the company wish to lay oil pipes.

Thursday night a gang of Italians began to excavate on the meadows, near the Elizabethport depot, just outside of the city line. They worked all night while two hundred men stood guard to see that they did not run up any streets. Friday morning a representative of the oil company called on N. K. Thompson, the Street Commissioner, and asked him to permit to open the street, showing him at the time the receipt of City Clerk Manning for the \$10,000 bond filed yesterday.

John Smith, City Attorney, advised the Street Commissioner not to grant the permit until the officials of the company proposed a license signed by Mayor Rankin giving them authority to open any street.

Mayor Rankin being out of town, the oil men sought Attorney P. J. Ryan, acting Mayor. Mr. Ryan refused to issue any license until he had the matter before the Common Council.

The oil men then doubled their working force and soon reached Pine street. By that time an angry crowd of citizens was on the spot and threats of a ducking in the bay were many. Just at that juncture a platoon of police arrived and ordered the diggers not to touch the street.

The oil men then took their force south of the city near the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad bridge and set them to work on the other end of the proposed route. The Council Chamber in the City Hall was crowded at night by the interested citizens who were anxious to know what was going to be done in the matter by the Common Council. President C. J. Ryan announced that the meeting had been called for the purpose of taking definite action on the franchise.

After considerable skirmishing by both parties the resolution which passed Tuesday was rescinded and Councilman Ford presented a resolution revoking all commissions granted to the oil company and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Ford, Patterson, Brady, Oakes and Engel, was appointed by President Ryan. It was left with them to report next week as to what could be done.

SLENDER CLEWS TO BROKER RICE.

Visited the Glen Island Hotel in Company with a Friend?

TRAIL LEADS NOWHERE.

Whereabouts Still a Mystery That Baffles the Skill of Detectives.

Some slender clues touching the movements of John Smith Rice, the missing wealthy Wall Street broker, have been attained, but his whereabouts is as much a matter of mystery to-day as it was two weeks ago.

Skilled detectives have traced his movements during the entire day of May 4, the day he left his invalid wife at his Summer home in Passaic, N. J., at 10 o'clock in the morning with the cheerful assurance that he would return on the 3 o'clock train. They have verified the assertion of Real Estate Broker McLean that he saw Mr. Rice walking down Cortlandt street toward the Pennsylvania railway ferry in the afternoon of May 4. Walters in the Glen Island Hotel, at West and Cortlandt streets, remember distinctly seeing two men, one of whom carried a new dress suit case and answered the description of Mr. Rice enter the hotel cafe late in the afternoon of that day. The companion of the man with the dress suit case was young, slender, well dressed and had a small black mustache. The two men remained some time at the hotel, eating and drinking.

An employee of the Pennsylvania Railway at the Jersey City station saw two men who answered the description given by the waiters at the Glen Island Hotel still later in the evening of May 4, in the barroom of Taylor's Hotel, in Jersey City. One of them carried a new dress suit case. They remained in the place for over an hour, drinking and chatting. It is not known at what time they went away.

Seen in Fifth Avenue?

That is as far as the detectives have been able to trace the man who answers the description of the missing broker, and if the testimony of Mr. W. E. Taylor, real estate dealer at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second street, be correct—and it is so—stated by that of his two sons—Mr. Rice has been in New York at least a week later than the date of his disappearance in Jersey City. Mr. Taylor is very positive that he saw Mr. Rice pass the windows of his office on the afternoon of Tuesday, May 11, or Wednesday, May 12.

It has been definitely ascertained that Mr. Rice bought his dress suit case at Doyle's trunk store in the Astor House basement. One of Doyle's salesmen distinctly remembers serving him, and George France, the tailor, at No. 102 Broadway, upon whom the missing man subsequently called, remembers hearing Rice say he bought the case at Doyle's for \$8.50.

Mr. Rice, who collects the rents for a row of flat houses owned by him at Doyle's trunk store in the Astor House basement, has not seen him for many months and holds a considerable amount of rent money awaiting his order.

At the safety deposit vaults, corner of Liberty street and Broadway, where Mr. Rice has been in the habit of storing his securities and valuables, it was said that he had not opened his vault for over a month. Neither has he appeared at the Bank of New Amsterdam, where he keeps his accounts, since May 1.

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On May 19 a man whose very vague description records a slight resemblance to John Smith Rice, disappeared from the street ferry boat and was drowned in East River. His body has not been found. "I hear nothing of my brother by the first of next week," said Mr. C. Murray Rice yesterday. "I shall offer a large reward in the hope of gaining some information of his whereabouts. And if he is still missing on June 1 I shall apply to the courts for an order to open his safety deposit vault and see if we can discover anything locked up there which might give us a clue to his whereabouts or supply any apparent motive for his disappearance. We cannot go into his private affairs until he has been missing a full four weeks, according to law."

Before John Smith Rice became a total abstemious, temperate man, he was known as "disappeared" on several occasions. But he was never gone longer than ten days, and his friends usually had slight difficulty in finding him.

NEW PARK FOR THE EAST SIDE.

Board of Street Opening Will Authorize Purchase of the Property.

The East Side Settlement, through Everett P. Wheeler, appealed to the city to create a new park Friday. The association which the Civil Service Commissioner represented has done a good deal for the poor in the vicinity of Seventy-sixth street and East River. It has maintained a playground and bathhouse for the people in that populous district in addition to establishing a library. The city, however, will destroy the present playground by cutting the new exterior street through it.

A petition was presented to the Board of Street Opening yesterday that the city could lay out a small park at Seventy-sixth and Seventy-eighth streets by purchasing a lot 200 feet on exterior street and running back 300 feet on each block, at a cost of about \$200,000, or it could buy 200 feet front on exterior street and 300 feet back only, for much less money. This could be laid out and used both as a park and playground. If the Jones's Wood Park was half a mile away, at Sixty-seventh street, his association would not have asked for the Seventy-sixth street park. But the legislature had killed the bill and it was not proposed to revive the project.

The members of the Board were also favorably impressed with Mr. Wheeler's plan and it was generally understood that they would authorize the outlay for the park in about two weeks.

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MAHOGANY Dresser of splendid make, swell with brass trimmings, base and body of French fretwork. Roman shield shape mirror of bevel Edge plate; size, 40x30 in. stand alone. Two little Drawers; an elegant thing. 53.90



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